

and pride of the past had all departed; only Paris with its mire, a garret and its misery, remained."¹

Again, real episodes find a place in the "Confession," — memories of early days; rambles in the valley of the Bievre, amid the foetid stench of that sewer-like stream and the acreous odour of its tanneries; the first visit to the Closerie des Lilas, the disgust inspired there by the sight of all the harlots with their paint, their cracked voices, and their impudent gestures; and then the excursion through the waste lands of Montrouge, the paths and fields of Arcueil and Bourg-la-Beine, to Fontenay-aux-Koses, Sceaux, and the Bois de VerriSres. But one need not imagine that this trip was made with such a creature as the callous, shameless, helpless Laurence; for, in recounting the episode elsewhere, Zola expressed himself as follows:

" I thought of my last excursion to Fontenay-aux-Koses with the loved one, the good fairy of my twentieth year* Springtime was budding into birth, the path was bordered by large fields of violets. . . . *She* leant on my arm, languishing with love from the sweet odour of the flowers. . . . Deep silence fell from the heavens, and so faint was the sound of our kisses that not a bird in all the hedges showed sign of fear. . . . "We ascended to the woods of Verri&res, and there, in the grass under the soft, fresh

foliage, we
discovered some tiny violets. . . . Directly I
found a fresh
one I carried it to her. She bought it of me,
and the price
I exacted was a kiss. . . . And now amid the
hubbub of the
Paris markets I thought of all those things, of
all that
happiness. . . . I remembered my good fairy,
now dead and
gone, and the little bouquet of dry violets
which I still

* "La Confession de Claude," Nouvelle Edition, 1903, p.
141.